DECLARATION OF THE COMMISSIONERS

For Visitation of UNIVERSITIES, and for placing and displacing of MINISTERS in SCOTLAND;

Against Praying, or Preaching for the pretended King of SCOTLAND:

With some REASONS Given by some of the MINISTERS of *Edinburgh*, why they cannot in Conscience omit to pray for Him:

Together with an

ANSVVER

to the said REASONS,

Wherein the unwarrantablenesse of that practice is proved from the Word of GOD.

And the equity and necessity of the present proceedings of the COMMISSIONERS in order to the publick Peace, is cleared and justified to the Consciences of rationall and peaceable men.

By a Friend to the Commonwealth.

Printed at *Leith*, in the

Pam 1176

BY THE COMMISSIONERS

For Visiting UNIVERSITIES *in* SCOTLAND, *and placing and displacing* MINISTERS.

BY vertue of an Order to Us directed from the Right Honourable the Councell of State, impowering Us to punish all such in the Ministery or Universities, as shall be found reviling the present Government, or shall endeavour to debauch or keep the People dis-affected, by praying for the pretended King of *Scots*, or his late Fathers Family, or by praying or preaching for a Monarchicall Government, by which they labour to weaken the just Interest of the Commonwealth of *England* in this Nation, and to affix and fasten the Common-People in their late enmity and oppositions; (who are caused to erre by following such sowers of sedition) all which being contrary to the aforesaid Order, and also expressely forbidden by the Word of GOD, which injoyns a peaceable subjection to Civill Powers, and much more to those that the Lord hath now appointed over this Nation, to the Justice of whose Cause, his hand hath given a Divine and immediate Testimony in most memorable and many signal Consequences. Wherein not onely not to see and acknowledge the finger of GOD; But on the contrary, maliciously to oppose the wayes of his Providence, must needs argue a very high degree of Ignorance or wilfulnesse: Therefore in conscience of our Duty to GOD, as also in reference to a faithfull discharge of that Trust and Authority committed to Us, and for preventing the great Inconveniences by such Enormous Practices in Ministers, and others for the future, We do by these presents Declare to all Persons whom these shall or may concern, That whosoever shall be duely convicted to offend in any of the aforesaid Particulars after Publication of this Our Declaration, shall be severely punished and proceeded against, as an Enemy to, and a Disturber of the Peace of the Commonwealth; And to the intent that due notice may be given, We do Order that these Presents be Printed, and Publickly Proclaimed at the Mercat Cross at *Edinburgh*, and also that Copies thereof be sent to the severall Sheriffs in the respective Counties and

Shires in this Nation, to be by their appointment Proclaimed in the Chief Mercat Towns or Burghs within their Jurisdictions, and to be affixed on the Mercat Crosses, or most Publick Places, whereby full obedience may be given to the abovementioned Orders, and none concerned may pretend ignorance.

At Edinburgh, *the second day of August*, 1653.

SOME

REASONS,

Why the Ministers of Christ in Scotland, *ought not to be troubled for praying for the* KING; *And wherefore we cannot in Conscience omit that Duty.*

HAving seriously pondered, as in his sight, whose servants we are, the practise of this duty now prohibited; We find, that we may not omit publick Prayer for our King, notwithstanding of the said Prohibition: And least our practice be misconstrued, as flowing from ignorance or wilfulnes. We shall first offer to wipe away that aspersion of pertinacy, and next shew the grounds which do fix us to this necessary duty.

As for the first. *Our Witness is in heaven, and our record on high, that it is not out of any carnal design, or stubbornes of spirit, that we continue performing this duty. It were extream folly needlesly to provoke the Power under whose hand the Almighty hath put us. If We durst advise with flesh and blood* [*Spare thy self*] *would sound loud in our ears, and quickly present Overtures of yeelding; but the terrour of the Almighty, and his Oath lying on our consciences, hold us on to this duty.* 2. *We conceive that our peaceable and quiet deportment in our respective charges, doth vindicate us from the imputation of stubbornes and sedition in this our practice. We have been no hinderance to people under our charge, to bear the burthens in quietnes, that are laid upon them; Neither have we anywise stirred them up to tumults and commotions.* 3. *The way wherein We have formerly*

merly walked, shall herein for us; unless constancy in conscientious principles be misconstructed, and nicknamed Pertinacy. 4. The point is also manifest to every one who will soberly be pleased to consider the Petition, or Petitions which we present to God for him; which usually are for a sanctified use of the sad afflictions that lie on him, and preservation from snares; his condition calling for this much at our hands. Shall others in distress, captivity, and exile be remembred to God in our publick Prayers, and this be accounted a commendable duty: And ought it to be accounted Pertinacy, not to cast out from the Prayers of Gods Church and People, the distressed King, compassed with so great difficulties? 5. When we call to mind our publick Prayers for our late King in the midst of his hostility against us, We marvel, if any who profess respect to tender consciences, will offer to put the Messengers of Christ to trouble for a duty bound on their consciences, and so little hurtful to any. Finally, they who do, or forbear doing out of pertinacy and stubbornes of spirit, can shew no just and weighty grounds of their acting or forbearance. But we offer these ensuing grounds and warrants of conscience, Wherenpon we walk in this practice.

First, *We look upon this performance as a duty, not only enjoyned in the Word of God, and established by the Law of the Land, in the Directory for Worship confirmed by Acts of Parliament; but also as bound upon our Consciences with our own consent, both in the National, and Solemn League and Covenant, wherein He also hath entred with us; and therein, not only our own consciences, but also the whole World are called on to witness with God (to whom the Oath is made) to our reallity, sincerity, and constancy in performing our duty.*

Secondly, *This Obligation hath a new tie on our consciences to this individual Person, by the Oath sworn by the Representative of the Land, in our Names, when the Civil Securities unto Religion, and the Interests of Christ in his Ordinances, were likewise confirmed unto us, by his Oath, as well as by Law.*

Thirdly, *As it is a great sin in any, to countermand that which God hath commanded, And to give order that a precept, which God hath appointed to oblige us alwaies (though not to all times) shall never oblige, And that we shall never give obedience thereto; So when such a command is given out, it is then* casus confessionis: *Then to adhere to the Authority of Divine Precepts, is a necessary testimony to the truth, and doth oblige them more than ever, unless we would obey men rather than God.*

Farrable

Fourthly, *Ministers of the Gospel are the Ambassadors and Servants of Jesus Christ, from whom they have their Commission, which may not be limited nor altered by any power on earth: For if in one duty, earthly powers can alter or limit, they may as wel do it in moe: And if they may prohibit a duty, they may also command that which is no duty, and so render us the servants of men, in matters of God.*

An ANSWER *to a* PAPER, *Intituled,*

Some REASONS *why the Ministers of Christ in* Scotland *ought not to be troubled for praying for the King, and wherefore we cannot in conscience omit that duty.*

THat Concession in the beginning of your Paper, *That the Almighty hath put you under the hand of another Power*, is remarkable: But how well this acknowledgment doth accord with that practice of adhering to the Power which the same Almighty hand hath removed, is not apparent. The Question is not, Whether you may pray concerning him, either for or against him in a Christian way, as that GOD would shew mercy to his Soul, and give him pardon of sin, and repentance under that stupendious guilt of innocent blood which lyes both upon him, and upon his Fathers house, (and that in the judgment of your very selves) and that GOD would humble him under those dreadfull appearances of God against him, in rejecting him from reigning over his people: But whether you may pray for him as King of *Scotland*, and put up those favourable requests on his behalf, which tend to preserve a precious and religious remembrance and observance of Him in the Peoples minds. This is the manifest scope and sense of the Declaration, which he that runs may read.

Now for this you say, *We shall first offer to wipe away that aspersion of pertinacy, and next shew the grounds which do fix us to this necessary duty.*

For answer whereto, we shal first remove the grounds whereby you labour to prove that this is your duty, and then leave you to wipe off that aspersion of pertinacy, if any lay it on you, as well as you can. For if the course be warrantable; to persist therein is constancy: but if it be not warrantable, it must needs be called by some other name.

Now

Now for the grounds and warrants of Conscience, wherein you walk in this practice, you offer four: whereof indeed only the two first are arguments to prove the conclusion, that you ought to pray for the man, whom you call King: but the two last seem rather to be inferences from it, if they be any thing.

The two first are these, which we joyn together, because the same answer fits them both.

1. *We look upon this performance as a duty, not onely injoyned in the Word of GOD, and established by the Laws of the Land, in the Directory for Worship, confirmed by Acts of Parliament; but also as bound upon our own consciences, with our own consent both in the Nationall and Solemn League and Covenant, wherein he also hath entred with us, and wherein not onely our own consciences, but also the whole world, are called on to witnesse with GOD to whom the Oath is made, to our reality, sincerity and constancy in performing our duty.*

2. *This obligation hath a new tie on our consciences to this individuall person, by the oath sworn by the representative of the land in our name, When the civil securities unto Religion, and the Interests of Christ in his Ordinances, were confirmed to us by his Oath as well as by Law.*

To these in four words.

1. Whereas you alledge *the Word of God*, we are most intirely willing to submit this whole Controversie to the alone determination thereof, judging it most unmeet, that things of mans making should stand therein by jowl with the Word of God. But because you point us to no place thereof, we will point you to one or two, wherein that word commandeth subjection to, and prayers for the powers that are in being. *Rom.* 13 1. *Let every soul be subject to the higher powers, for there is no power but of God.* 1. Tim. 2. 2. *Let prayers be made for Kings, and for all that are in authority.* Wherein he seems directly to obviate & prevent any scruple that might arise about the justnesse of their Title, by pointing them so plainly to the actuall existence of powers. For they all knew that the power which then ruled the world, was set up by a world of blood, and *Nero* the present Emperour, as wicked a Tyrant as ever lived, but yet to submit to him, and to pray for him, being under his power, was not in the Apostles judgement any justification of the unwarrantable acquisition of his power. And the Jewes are commanded *to pray for the peace of Babylon*, when they were in the hand of the Babylonians. *Jer.* 29. 7. But you are in the hand, and under the power of the Parliament, and therefore you ought to pray for them, *for in their peace, you shall have peace.* But he whom you call King, is not

King.

King. He never exercised any kingly power on this side the water, and now he exerciseth none in the other part of *Scotland*, therefore he is not King. If it be said, that by the Word of God he ought to be King, let it be shewed where the Word of God hath intayled the Kingdom of *England* or *Scotland* upon the Family of the *Stuarts*.

2. For *the Law of the Land, and Acts of Parliament for him*; we wonder you should speak of these, having been long since annulled by the Authority of the Commonwealth. And how an Act of any authority can bind and be in force, when there is no authority that will maintain it, is to us a riddle. Your Countreyman Mr. *Knox*, who was as zealous against Tyrants as you are for them, and did help the Grandmothers head to the same block upon which the late King lost his: He tels Queen *Elizabeth*, that she had no warrant of conscience to rule the Nation of *England*, neither from her birth, nor from any constitutude Laws and Ordinances of men; and that if she stood upon that, the Almighty would cut her off, but from the providence of GOD, calling her to that place of power, *who ruleth in the Kingdoms of the Earth, and giveth them to whomsoever he will*.

3. For your *Oaths* and *Covenants* (to him or to his fathers house, for there is the same reason of both) they were either absolute, that he should be King whether GOD would continue him or no; or else conditionall, that you would submit to him, unless and untill the overruling wisdom of God should put him down, and set up another power in his place. If they were conditionall, the obligation is void, because the providence of God hath actually dispossessed him. But if they were absolute, what warrant is there in the Word of God for such Covenants? Can you promise that any man shall have power whether God will or no? All your Oaths and Covenants were condicionall. For such Covenants for the maintaining of any power upon earth, wherein there is no condition neither expresst nor understood, concerning giving way to the all-disposing power and providence of God, are no better then confederacies against God, and therefore horrible snares, and not to be defended, but repented of, lest you be found fighters against, and resisters of the mighty Hand of God.

Suppose a quarrell arise between me and my neighbor, which of us shal be master, and he saith and swears that I shall never be his master, and I say that he shall never be mine. If hereupon we fight, till that I have laid him flat upon his back, and bound him hand and foot; if now when my sword is upon his breast, and his life is at my mercy, if I shall ask him, whether he will yeeld now, and he shall refuse, is it not an unparaleld

paraleld piece of pride and ſtubborneſs? But ſuppoſe he ſhal ſay, that his conſcience is ſo tender that he cannot yeeld to me becauſe of his oath, will not every one ſay, that his oath binds no longer but whilſt he was in a capacity to reſiſt, but by my prevailing over him, the obligation ceaſeth. For now God puts him under me, & ſo determins the caſe on my ſide.

Therefore, though you have made a Covenant, and bound it with an oath, for your King and againſt the Commonwealth, yet now God hath cut that knot in pieces, by putting you in another capacity from what you were then. And you may remember what ſolemn appeals were made to Heaven, both by you and us, when we came firſt amongſt you, for our moſt juſt and neceſſary defence, wherein the Lord hath been pleaſed to give a gracious and favorable teſtimony to the ſincerity of the deſires of his poor ſervants; and will you not reſt in his arbitriment to whom you have ſo often referred the cauſe? to whoſe determination both you and we did with joynt conſent refer it. And the Lord, that righteous Judge hath been pleaſed to judge between us. Though much may be argued againſt the works of God, when conſidered ſingly and alone, yet when the works of God are ſuperadded teſtimonies to the truths revealed in his Word, and when they are anſwers of the prayers and appeals of all his people on both ſides, and favourable ſmiles upon the actings of ſome of them following him in untroden paths of difficulty and danger, the ſame diſpenſations being alſo diſtinguiſhing rebukes and frowns upon others, under theſe and the like circumſtances, they will argue very much. And though it is hard for man, and it may be too hard for us to manage this argument, to the compleat conviction of oppoſers and gainſayers, and to improve it to the utmoſt in all the concluſions which it will reach unto; yet to thoſe who obſerve the Name of God in his works, & are not byaſſed with the guilt of former actings to this or that intereſt, it will reach to conclude the preſent queſtion, and abundantly praeponderate to the purpoſes and reſolutions of men, if laid in the ballance with them.

4. Whereas you are pleaſed to mention *The ſecurities which the King gave you for the Intereſt of Chriſt and Religion*, It will be hard to demonſtrate to any rationall underſtanding, how there could be any reall ſafety to Religion, in receiving him to reigne with his former principles, and with his unchanged heart amongſt you. The World took notice in your treaties with him at the *Hague*, & here too, how litle truſt you had in him, and how you held him off at firſt, but how you could afterwards, (unleſs a mouthful or two of Court air wil make wiſe men mad) diſpenſe with your conſciences to ſoder with him when you ſaw no reall change of heart and ſelf-abhorrence in him for his former wicked ways, & how

the emitting of a feigned, forced Declaration, upon minatory importunities, could be just incouragement for the admitting of a blood-thirsty and blood-guilty man (for so in that Declaration you have made him to confesse) to reign over you, you will find a time to consider all these things.

Your 3. ground is this: *As it is a great sin to countermand that which God hath commanded, and to give order, that a precept of God shall not oblige, so when such a command is given out, it is then* casus confessionis, *then to adhere to the authority of divine precepts, is a necessary testimony to the truth.* But if ever these words afford a *Ground and Warrant of conscience to walk in that practice* of praying for the King, your assumption which you seem to understand and beg, must be proved, *viz. That God hath given you such a command to pray for him*, which the Declaration countermands: but till then, this Proposition will not reach the Conclusion aimed at: If you be Confessors, what truth of Christ do you suffer for? name it. Is it not this, that *Charles Stuart* ought to be King? and will you indeed stop your own mouths from preaching the blessed Gospel of Christ, rather then be silent about that mans interest? Wil you not preach Christ, unless you may preach up *Charles Stuart* also? Now the Lord lay not this sin to your charge. You wil suffer upon the lowest and most uncomfortable account that ever men did. For you suffer clearly upon the Royall interest; not for *the testimony of* JESUS, not for any truth of Religion, but as witnesses to the Kings Interest.

Your 4. ground is this: *That Ministers of the Gospel receive their Commission from Jesus Christ, which earthly powers cannot alter nor limit. For if in one duty, then in more; and if they may prohibite a duty, they may command that which is no duty.*

And here still you take it for granted, That it is a duty to pray for that Titular King; but you should have proved, that when you were made Ministers, Christ did put this into your Commission, and then you had said something. Surely a Popish exemption of the Clergy from under the arm of the secular power, is not that which you drive at. For then you would never have alledged Statutes and Acts of Parliament as oblieging you in conscience to the King. But this is certain, that that which formerly was, or which now is a duty, may cease to be a duty, not through any humane prohibition, but through a providentiall alteration of the state of things. *The woman* (saith the Apostle) *is bound by the Law to her husband so long as he liveth, but if her husband be dead, she is freed from that Law, Rom.* 7. 2, 3. And therfore your selves also upon this account of the revolutions of providence, do find a present freedom of conscience to desist from some former actings, to which you thought your selves formerly obliged by the Covenant.

And

And this may ſuffice for the removall of the grounds and pillars of this your practice of praying for the King, whereby you offer to prove that it is your duty. Which being not yet done, we will put you into a way for the future, by cutting out your work for you, and laying open the true ſtate of the controverſie before you in a very few words.

If ever you wil prove (therefore) that it is your duty to pray for the King, and no duty to pray for the Commonwealth, you muſt prove theſe two things:

1. That every ſubject ought not only to look at the viſible exiſtence, but to be ſatisfied in his conſcience about the title of the Magiſtrates that rule over him, before he pray for them, or yeeld ſubjection to them.

But contrary to this, it hath been already proved from the Word of God, that it is warrant enough to any mans conſcience to pray for Authority, and quietly to ſubmit himſelf thereto, if that he hath ſenſible aſſurance of his being in the hand thereof. The Apoſtles word is, ἐξουσίαι, which ſignifies, *the powers that are in being.*

But ſecondly, when you have done this, which in this Paper you do not once attempt, which was a ſtrange overſight, you muſt alſo prove,

2. That the King hath a juſt title to Authority here, and that the Parliament hath no juſt title.

Now for this, there are foure allegations uſuall. 1. His birth-right. 2. Acts of Parliament for him. 3. The pretended injuſtice of the War againſt him. 4. The Solemn League and Covenant. Theſe are the moſt uſuall weapons of defence in this Cauſe.

But each of theſe muſt be maintained and made good by that unerring rule of the written Word of God, before they will overcome the underſtandings, and convince the conſciences of conſcientious men. Therefore if you have any thing to offer from the Word of God for the maintaining of them, *produce your cauſe, ſaith the Lord, bring forth your ſtrong reaſons, ſaith the King of Jacob.* The Lord now calls you to bring it forth; which till it be done, we conceive,

1. That birth gives no title to Magiſtracy. That every beggars brat in the high-way, upon that ſingle conſideration of his birth, hath as much title to the Kingdom of *Scotland*, as the children of *Charles Stuart*.

This conceit of a birth-right unto Magiſtracy (unleſs that God confer a title upon ſuch or ſuch a family, as he did upon *David's*) is one of the blind principles of tyranny, nouriſht in mens conſciences, through Popiſh darkneſs, and now that God is diſcovering the myſtery of Antichriſt, and untravelling that whole web of Iniquity, which is woven and made up of two threeds twiſted together, *viz.* civil and ſpirituall ſlavery: he

hath begun to discover this also. If some families in the World had the faculty of begetting wise children, and fit for government, there were some colour of reason, why their birth should give them a right, *viz.* because it gives them a fitnesse to govern. But we see that wise men beget fools.

But you will say, *Parliaments may intail the Crown, and give a title to such or such a family, though God by immediate designation do not.* But then you must prove this. And then we add,

2. That it may be proved both from the Scriptures, and from common sense, that it is both unlawful and impossible for any Parliament to make such an Act as shall bind the hands of their successors. And the reason is this, Because that no Humane wisdom is able to foresee all the future Inconveniences that may arise; and therfore no Humane Constitution can be, or ought to be unalterable. The next Power may disannul it. Therefore the King hath no title upon this accompt: For the Commonwealth hath repealed those Acts. But if you say, The Commonwealth doth not lawfully succeed your Parliaments; then

3. You fall upon the business of the War, which if you will undertake, you have many difficult things to prove, and that under the heavy disadvantage of a contrary testimony from Heaven; whereof one is this, that that man had some rights in *England*. For this was part of the quarrell, whereas we know that he had no Rights there, neither by the Word of God, nor by the Laws of our Land. And therefore the War was just. For the English Army did not march a step against you, though there were other just provocations, till your Commissioners had patcht up the businesse with him at the *Hague*, asserting I know not what pretended Rights of his in *England*.

But 4. If you will needs be tryed by the Solemn League and Covenant, a weapon at which you seem to be very expert, we must then cut you out some more work, *viz.* 1. To prove that your sense is the true sense of it. 2. If you prove that, then you must prove that the Covenant it self was a lawfull thing; when you have justified your disobedience to Authority, by the Covenant, you must then justifie the Covenant it self by the Word of God.

We perceive, that many who talk much of the Covenant, understand it no better than those *Highlanders*, who having summoned a Castle, and being asked in whose name they summoned it: they answered, In the Name of the Solemn League and Covenant. And truly they seem to us to understand it little better, who say, We are tied by the Covenant to resist the Power that ruleth over us, to inforce your Presbyterian

rian way upon the whole Nation of *England*, to preserve from justice that grand Delinquent, who slew with the edge of the sword so many thousand innocent persons. *For he shed innocent blood very much, till he had filled the streets of Jerusalem from one end to another*, and the whole Land therewith in all the Cities and Coasts thereof, *besides his sin in building up again the high places, & in rearing up altars for Baalim*

But by this time you see your work, and what you must prove, if ever you will justifie your present wayes before God or men. And yet we must tell you once more, That when you have proved all the rest, you have proved nothing, if you leave out the first, as you have done in this your Paper.

And now to proceed to the rest of it. That one passage only seems worthy of most particular Animadversion, where you think fit to mention your *peaceable and quiet deportment, and that you have in no wise stirred up the people to tumults and seditions*; which, if it be a true and sincere profession, fame hath done you very much wrong. But are not prayers for the King, under that name and notion of King, under such designations of him, and in such expressions and petitions for him, as may insinuate your respect towards him, to the people, (for else, why did you alleadge your Oaths and Covenants, which you say, bind you to him as your King, if you put up only such modest and innocent petitions for him as may suit any wicked man in affliction?) And are not complaints of a strange power in your prayers to God, and preachings to the people, are these no wayes nor means of disquieting and stirring up the people? We commend unto you that of *David*: *Lord, lead me in a way of plainness, because of them that observe me. Psa.* 27. 11. And the primitive Church, in *Acts* 2. 46. *walked in simplicity and singleness of heart.* But if your future deportment shall attest and make good the truth of this your profession, that which is past will be forgotten and forgiven. But for men of reputation to relinquish and abandon that Interest, we are apprehensive how much it may reflect upon their honor and wisdom in tampering with it so long, in complying with it, and cleaving to it at the first; and we have seen Conscience pretended, when such an Interest hath layn at the bottom, which is hypocrisie. From which, as also from pertinacy in your way, there is no better way to purge your selves, that it may not seem to cleave to you, as *Naaman*'s leprosie to *Gehazi* for ever, than by submission to the *Powers that are*, and *supplications for the City* wherein you live: *in the peace whereof you shall have peace.* For the present let us briefly commend to your most serious thoughts these four Considerations in reference to the matter in hand.

1. What

1. What a fruitleſs and ſad miſtake of the nature of your work it is, to pray and preach up particular intereſts among your people, when you ſhould preach the ſaving truths of the Goſpel to their ſoul's. Alas! what profits it to the buſineſs of Faith and Repentance and Spiritual union and communion with the Lord Jeſus, to cry-up the King, or to cry-down the Common-wealth? Will you ceaſe to preach the Goſpel rather than ceaſe to preach up *Charles Stuart*? We mourn for you before the Lord in this thing, and the Lord Jeſus help you in it. Would the Spirit of God thus forſake you, and leave you to ſuch a ſinful and dreadful miſtake, were there not ſomething wherein you have firſt forſaken him? Now the Lord help you to look into your hearts, and to conſider your wayes, and *to make diligent ſearch*. Sure we are, that you are ſadly and ſtrangely below and beſide the buſineſs, the great buſineſs of Divinity in theſe impertinent ſtrifs about Civil Intereſts. And this is the firſt Conſideration.

2. That the ſame obligation lies upon our conſciences, to preſerve the peace of the Commonwealth, which, you ſay, doth upon yours to hold up the Intereſt of the King: and with this advantage, that we are ſubſervient therein to Him, whoſe Almighty Hand hath actually placed this power over you, and hath not yet born witneſs to the contrary Intereſt. For *We will remember the Name of our God*, and his wonderfull works: *we will often make mention of the loving kindneſs of the Lord, and the praiſes of the Lord, according to all that the Lord hath beſtowed on us* and done for us, *according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his loving kindneſſes*. And indeed, it is a matter of conſcience with us, not to betray, nor to wrong, or weaken that Cauſe through over much indulgence, to which God himſelf hath born witneſs. We do beleeve that the preſent Cauſe of the Commonwealth, hath much of the Intereſt of Chriſt wrapt up with it. And, though to tender conſciences, diſſenting from us, we ſhew much favour and forbearance; yet Conſcience, you know, is not the rule, but the Word of God. And though we hope better things of you, yet there be two ſorts of conſciences, which we conceive are not uſually very tender, *viz.* hereticall conſciences, and ſeditious conſciences.

3. Conſider how long a time of tenderneſs and forbearance you have had, ever ſince the Engliſh power firſt prevailed here, and how long God and man hath waited on you; which we think will not be eaſily parallel'd in the Hiſtories of former Ages. We have carried our ſelves towards you, (to the praiſe of his Grace we ſpeak it, becauſe you call us, & compel us to it) not as Victors to conquered Enemies, but as Bre-

thren to brethren, for ſo indeed we deſire to look on you, and no otherwiſe. And whatever there is in our power, wherein we may further encourage you and ſtrengthen your hands in the work of the Miniſtery, we hope we ſhall rejoyce to do it, for His ſake whom you ought to ſerve in the Goſpel of His Son. If the Lord would encline your hearts to know and to do his work; It is our hearts deſire and prayer to God, that His good pleaſure may proſper with you. Wherein, we hope, we ſhall one day praiſe Him, when *the envy of Ephraim ſhall depart.*

You may be as good, as holy as you will, you may enjoy all the Ordinances of Chriſt in the liberty and purity of the Goſpel, according to your hearts deſire, in your own way, and according to your own conſciences. Which is more than you would have allowed to us. We know nothing but the carkaſs of Church Diſcipline without the life and power of it, yea, a mungrel Diſcipline made up of Civil aſwel as Spiritual power, and ſo no better than a Goſpel Monſter that hath been taken from you: which warming in its bowels a fatal engine of diſobedience to that Civil Government which the Hand of the Almighty hath ſet over you, and which doth plenarily poſſeſs and protect you, it could not with any colour of conſcience or reaſon be any longer ſuffered in that exorbitancy: But if your Diſcipline which hath been wont to be a check to your Parliaments, will hereafter learn to keep within its own channel, you may ſtill practice it, as ſundry godly perſons of the Preſbyterian Judgment do at this day in *England.* Therefore, why are *the diſſentions of Brethren like the bars of a Palace?* What ſhall be done for you?

You ſpeak of burdens: We know not what you mean, unleſs it be the Monthly Aſſeſſment, for there is no other burden laid on you, (but ſome we are ſure are taken off) which yet is no more for all *Scotland*, than for that one County of *Ulſter* in *Ireland*, *viz.* about 8000 l. a month. And you ſay, *you have been no hinderance to the people to bear the burdens in quietneſs that are laid upon them*: For indeed, why ſhould you? Are not you the very men that lay theſe burdens by them? The Aſſeſſment is for the Pay of the Army (though it goes but a little way towards it.) The Army is continued, becauſe the people are unquiet and diſaffected. But who is it that feeds theſe malignant humors, and keeps up this diſaffection of the people? who is it? and what will they anſwer for it in the great day of accompt? Let us reaſon with you before the Lord a little.

This power which God hath ſet over you for your good, and which the Lord knows hath been favorable and tender over you: What have

your returns been? Protection requires allegeance by the rule of commutative justice. But have you not made unworthy, unchristian returns upon them for that protection, for that love and tenderness whereby they have sought to win you, by being their enemies in heaven & earth? endeavoring to alienate the hearts of the Lords People from them, and denying them that remembrance in your prayers, which they have often begg'd, and which, you know, they would prize far more than that wicked man doth, for whom *you cry, even to the Lord do you cry, but he will not hear you.* And are there two greater unkindnesses in the world than these? And yet the Lord hath enabled them to forgive, or at least to forbear you hitherto. But take heed, if you persist in your course, having had dreadful meetings with God therein, lest you bring the matter to this passe, That God will not forgive though we would. *For thy violence against thy brother Jacob, thou shalt be cut off for ever,* Obad. 10. Now it may be ingenuity may work in you; but if nothing will break your hearts, you will find to our grief, and to your trouble, that the patience of mortal men is finite.

4. Consider sadly, how little benefit and advantage ariseth to the Interest of Jesus Christ in *Scotland* yea, what real disservice you do to Him, by your adhering to that Man, whom the Lord by a mighty Hand hath taken from you, and by disaccepting his kindness therein, and in casting forth the branches of that bloody House, which hath been a plague to this Nation from the dayes of your forefathers. If you accept not the Instruments who did it, or approve not the manner of their proceedings therein, yet why do you not rejoyce for the thing it self? All the world knows that you were innocent enough about it. We know not any Magistracy at this day appearing upon the Earth, to whom the Lord hath given a more abundant and immediate Testimony, and for whose establishment he hath more gloriously revealed & made bare his own Arm from Heaven, and who have further engaged in protecting and promoting the Interest of Jesus Christ in the world, then this which you resist, and whose hands you labour to weaken. But will you be the men of all other, who hinder the Kingdom of God from coming? God forbid. As for this Man, Heaven and Earth are witnesses, that you have don your duty to him, (if so you cal it) even to the utmost; both day and night have seen it. You have wept over his grave long enough. Therefore we leave with you, beseeching Him to set it home upon your hearts, that which the Lord said to *Samuel*, (1 *Sam.* 16.) *How long will thou mourn for* Saul, *whom I have rejected from reigning over Israel.*

FINIS.